Strategic Planning: Information Resources Project

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The Information Resources Project was one of the School's strategic planning priorities. In essence, everything we do involves providing information in a variety of different ways. The committee was given the following charge across the breadth of our work:

1. Develop an integrated approach to creating and disseminating information to our clients,
2. Maximize client access to information, and
3. Maximize revenue from our information resources.

The committee did substantial research over the course of 15 months to inform its analysis and recommendations. In addition to identifying and categorizing our many different approaches to providing information, for example, the committee also conducted an extensive survey of 6,000 local government officials, 2,300 court officials, and 10,000 listserv participants. We will build on this data by continuing to be more intentional and structured about getting feedback from our clients.

The Information Resources Project Report provides a valuable framework for insuring that the School uses the most effective and efficient strategies for getting information to the people who need it. Here are a few highlights.

- *The Information Resource Guide.* The *Guide* describes the most frequently used resources

and services provided by our faculty. One goal is to provide faculty with the detailed information they need in deciding what resources will best meet the needs of their clients. The range of choices has increased dramatically in recent years. The identification of common approaches to our work also will make it easier for our staff to develop standardized support processes that will be more effective and efficient. The *Guide* will be regularly reviewed and maintained.

- <u>Apps for Mobile Devices.</u> The committee considered a range of new resources that show promise for wide use and value to the School. After considering a number of options, they recommended focusing on applications for mobile devices as a supported, standard information resource available to faculty.

- *<u>Popular Government.</u>* The committee recommended against replacing *Popular Government* with an email newsletter, an option it had considered earlier. The members concluded that faculty will have a greater impact by investing their efforts in producing other resources that meet many of the needs identified by the readers of the magazine.

The management team reviewed the committee's report over the summer and discussed the most effective way to move these and other ideas forward. Work needs to be done over time, and so we will form an ongoing Information Resources Committee to build on the work of the implementation committee.

The standing Information Resources Committee, which will be chaired by Todd Nicolet, will take on the following:

- Identifying, assessing, and publicizing new tools and strategies for teaching and communicating with our clients;

- Review the School's evaluation processes, starting with courses and aligning that effort with other initiatives to gather more regular feedback from our clients;

- Provide feedback for the maintenance and review of the information resources guidelines;

- Initiative a review of the entire effort after 18 months.

There are many ways to describe the School's work. Of course we are educators and advisors, and lots of other things too. On a fundamental level, however, we are in the information business. The committee has laid an important foundation for the development of a comprehensive and integrated approach to how we create and share information. Their thoughtful work will allow the School to do an even better job of meeting the needs of North Carolina officials.

Many thanks to all of the committee members for their hard work, and special thanks to Todd for

leading this effort. We will discuss the report at an upcoming faculty meeting and review the guidelines developed by the committee. I encourage you to read the report and pass along any comments to Todd or to me.